



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MONTHLY



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Know the Difference

Heat Cramps

- Crippling contractions of muscles.
- Not a severe threat to health.
- Should subside after acclimating and hydrating.

Heat Exhaustion

- A more serious injury.
- Results from dehydration and lacking electrolytes.
- Person might feel dizzy, fatigued, or develop headaches.
- Person suspected with heat exhaustion should be moved to a cool place and sip fluids.
- Seek medical attention.

Heat Stroke

- A serious, life threatening injury.
- Occurs when person's body can't regulate core temperature.
- If core temperature reaches 104° F irreversible injuries are caused to vital organs and may result in death.
- Headaches, vomiting, loss of consciousness, confusion, and light-headedness are symptoms.
- Seek medical attention **immediately** if heat stroke is suspected!

Heat Injuries/Outdoor Activities

HEAT ILLNESS/INJURIES:

Your body's natural mechanism to cool itself is by sweating, however, during hot weather, especially with high humidity, sweating isn't enough. Heat, mixed with low fluid intake, and any strenuous activity can cause your body's temperature to rise to dangerous levels putting yourself at risk of developing a heat illness or injury. Most heat illnesses occur from staying out in the heat too long, exercising too much, or not hydrating enough while exercising or working. Unfortunately, older adults, young children, and those who are sick or overweight are more susceptible to heat illnesses and injuries.

10 Tips to "Beat the Heat"

Recognize warning signs of dehydration—dark yellow or brownish urine, energy and coordination loss, cramps, headaches.

Allow for acclimation—slowly increase duration and intensity of outdoor activity over the first 2 weeks in a new climate, especially a climate with high temperatures (heat injuries are common within the first 2-3 days of physical activity in a new climate).

Drink up—once acclimated, fluid intake should be increased to accommodate increased sweat loss.

Have Fluids within arm's reach—always have something to drink, but avoid diuretics such as caffeinated drinks.

Don't rely on thirst—if you wait until you feel thirsty your body is already dehydrated, so drink even when you're not thirsty.

Sports Drinks—sports drink have additives that may provide electrolytes for your body, but water is preferable.

Drink it, Don't pour it—pouring the fluids on your head and body feels good, but does nothing to lower body temperature. Drinking fluids is much more beneficial for temperature regulation and hydration even though it may not give you that "cooled" feeling.

Exercise in the morning or evening—this is when temperatures are at their lowest.

Dress for the weather—keeping cool in hot weather means wearing lighter weight clothing and removing safety equipment during breaks only when safe to do so (i.e. helmets).

Break it up—Increase frequency and duration of breaks to help stay hydrated and cool. Know your flags and what they mean to you!

WGBT

AFPAM 48-151, Table A5.1/2
Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WGBT) is a composite temperature used to gauge the effect of temp, humidity, and wind speed. WGBT also determines work/rest cycles and flag conditions.

Know Your Flags

AFPAM 48-151, Table A2.2

- **Green Flag**—WGBT is between 80-84.9° F: Work/Rest for moderate work is 50/10 min, heavy work is 30/30 min.
- **Yellow Flag**—WGBT is between 85-87.9° F: Work/Rest for moderate work is 40/20 min, heavy work is 30/30 min.
- **Red Flag**—WGBT is between 88-89.9° F: Work/Rest for moderate work is 30/30 min, heavy work is 20/40 min.
- **Black Flag**—WGBT is above 90° F: Work/Rest for moderate work is 20/40 min, heavy work is 10/50 min.

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